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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KUALA LUMPUR 000570

SIPDIS

FOR EAP/MTS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/03/2018  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [MY](#)  
SUBJECT: GOM PROTESTS U.S. REMARKS ON ANWAR IBRAHIM CASE

REF: A. KUALA LUMPUR 563 - ANWAR ON OFFENSIVE  
[1](#)B. KUALA LUMPUR 557 - ANWAR TAKES REFUGE

Classified By: Ambassador James R. Keith, reason 1.4 (b and d).

[1](#)1. (C) Malaysian Foreign Ministry Secretary General Rastam Mohd Isa called in the Ambassador on July 3 to deliver a note of protest over remarks by the State Department Spokesman on June 30 related to the recent sodomy allegations against de facto Opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim. After reading highlights from the note, Rastam explained that he was delivering the protest on the specific instruction of the Prime Minister. "The Malaysian government is not happy at all" with the U.S. remarks, Rastam added.

[1](#)2. (SBU) We repeat the MFA "aide memoire" dated July 3 in full below.

Begin Aide Memoire:

The Government of Malaysia notes with great concern that Mr. Tom Casey, the Deputy Spokesman of the US State Department, who, by his own admission, had not had a chance to look at the facts made a statement in response to a question by a reporter regarding Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim at the daily press briefing on Monday, 30 June 2008.

We also note with concern that his comment was made in response to an erroneous assumption by the reporter who had referred to "Anwar's arrest".

The Government of Malaysia views very seriously the insinuation that Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim was subject to a "politically-motivated investigation or prosecution". Mr. Casey's expression of concern that the use of law enforcement or judicial procedures for anything other than legitimate purposes of the law seems to indicate that the United States is prejudiced against the Government of Malaysia and the enforcement of this country's laws, legislative procedures and administration of justice.

The Government of Malaysia has in fact assured that the police and relevant authorities in Malaysia will conduct a thorough investigation into the allegations made against Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim in accordance with Malaysian laws and in a professional and responsible manner.

As stated by the Prime Minister on 1 July 2008, the Government of Malaysia "will not intervene in the investigation into the allegations against Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim and the team carrying out the probe are professionals and they know their duties".

The investigation is not about politics and should not be viewed as politically motivated.

The Government of Malaysia has given assurances on the security and safety of Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim. He is not under any political persecution whatsoever. The laws of the country guarantee the safety of every citizen and the Government of Malaysia will ensure that no one is ill treated or threatened and that any action relating to the law would be implemented taking into account due process.

To suggest that there is a pattern between previous incidents and the current investigation is erroneous and a serious insinuation against the Government of Malaysia. This clearly demonstrates a gross misunderstanding of Malaysian society, values, culture and law.

Any presumption on the part of outsiders to comment on Malaysian laws and legal process is simply unacceptable to the Government of Malaysia. Malaysia is a law abiding country with high regard for the rule of law and due process. The rule of law is of the utmost priority to Malaysia. The United States or any other country has no right to intervene in this matter. It should be left to the police and relevant authorities to deal with the current situation.

End Aide Memoire.

13. (C) The Ambassador responded that it was unfortunate that the GOM had viewed the U.S. remarks as interference in Malaysia's internal affairs because that was neither our intention nor our view of our public affirmation of the rule of law. The U.S. took no partisan position in Malaysia's internal politics, and none should be inferred by the June 30 remarks, which were made in response to a question, not as a

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separate U.S. statement. The U.S. valued Malaysia as a friend, and we had a vested interest in Malaysia's success. The Ambassador encouraged better dialogue between our two governments, and he took the opportunity to recommend that the GOM soon name an ambassador-designate to take up the now vacant position in Washington.

14. (C) Rastam replied that the GOM would seek to maintain its good relations with the U.S., noting in particular the importance of our bilateral economic ties. The MFA wanted to ensure proper dialogue with the U.S. and hoped the Embassy would convey an accurate picture of Malaysia. Rastam said he did not intend to make a public issue out of the meeting with the Ambassador, and he undertook to inform the Ambassador if the GOM decided otherwise.

KEITH